

**Friendship Heights  
Transportation Management District  
Advisory Committee  
January 13, 2015**

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**Voting Members**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Barbara Condos (Vice Chair) | Town of Somerset                                      |
| Joe Dixon                   | GEICO   |
| Tiffany Gee (Chair)         | Chevy Chase Land Company                              |
| Campbell Graeb              | Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights |
| Christopher Itteilag        | Somerset House Management Association                 |
| Cobey R. Kuff               | WP Project Developer, LLC                             |
| John Mertens                | Friendship Heights Village                            |

**Non-voting Members**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Sandra L. Brecher | MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services |
|-------------------|---|

**TMD Staff**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Jim Carlson  | MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services |
| Nakengi Byrd | MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services |

**Absent**

|                       |                                       |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| James Calderwood      | Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers |
| Chief John Fitzgerald | Chevy Chase Village Police            |
| Matthew Folden        | M-NCPPC                               |
| Tiffany Gee (Chair)   | Chevy Chase Land Company              |
| Kenneth Hartman       | B-CC Services Center                  |

**Guests**

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Tim Balinskas            | Sharp & Co.                                  |
| Moiria Bindner           | Wells+Associates                             |
| Elizabeth Demetra Harris | Friendship Heights Village Council           |
| Bob Joiner               | The Agenda News                              |
| Nicholas Ramfos          | Council of Governments- Commuter Connections |
| Mayor Jeffrey Slavin     | Town of Somerset                             |

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**Abbreviations:**

GRH=Guaranteed Ride Home  
MWCOG=Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
SOV=Single Occupant Vehicle  
TMP=Traffic Mitigation Plan

**Item 1, 2 & 3-Introductions/Minutes/Chair Comments:** Chair Tiffany Gee called the meeting to order. Members and guest introduced themselves. Meeting minutes were tabled due to lack of quorum.

**Item 4-State of the Commute Survey-Council of Governments:** Nick Ramfos presented to the Committee the results of the latest regional State of the Commute Survey, conducted every three years by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG). The survey measures commuter travel patterns and their impact on roads and emissions. Phone interviews were conducted surveying the jurisdictions that make up the DC Metropolitan Area, which includes the District plus portions of Maryland and Virginia.

**Mr. Ramfos** reported the following:

- Mode share for Single Occupant Vehicles (SOV) is 60 percent region-wide. **Mr. Ramfos** said this may be due in part to transit price increases, resulting in low ridership.
- Survey results are used to measure compliance with Federal clean air mandates.
- Survey regions are made up of “inner core jurisdictions” (the District, Alexandria, parts of Montgomery County); “middle ring” (most of Montgomery County, Prince George’s, Fairfax); and “outer ring” (Frederick, Loudon, Prince William and Southern Maryland).
- SOV use tends to increase and transit use decreases in the middle ring, with biking and walking staying roughly the same; higher transit and biking use is seen in the inner core ring; and more carpool and vanpool use reported in the outer ring.
- More infrastructure funding is invested in core areas due to high rate of transit use.
- Commuters use the same mode of travel at least four days per week.
- Commuters who drive alone or take the train use these modes for the longest part of their trip.
- Commuter Connection’s purpose is to maintain commuters’ retention of alternative transit modes.
- Walking rate is slightly higher than biking. The data, presented as a combined total in the report, can be separated for further analysis.
- Commuters’ average travel distance is 16 miles, with about 36 minutes average travel time.
- In Montgomery County the SOV rate is 75 percent.

**Mr. Ramfos** said that telework results were promising, with 675,000 workers region-wide teleworking 1.3 days per week. The most growth has been from the Federal government. Also reported about telework:

- Slight decline seem in private sector telework may be due to companies retracting programs.
- There have been hearings examining whether certain Federal agencies falsified employee telework records.
- Thirty percent of teleworkers are full time employees, with six out of 10 participating in a formal program.

Also discussed:

- Commuter access to a transit stop: 50 percent report access within 0.5 mile of a bus stop; and 65 percent have access less than a mile.
- HOV lanes and encouraging commuters to double their car occupancy to save toll costs.
- Seventeen percent indicate that their commute is easier than one year ago; and 64 percent are satisfied overall with their commute. However, they are not satisfied with the transportation system as a whole.
- There are social and personal benefits of rideshare programs, such as reduced traffic congestion, vehicle wear and tear, pollution, and fuel saving.
- Seven percent of participants tried to change commute mode based on Commuter Connections marketing initiatives; and 62 percent of employees know of Commuter Connections programs, such as Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) – although this is on the decline due to the ending of the GRH marketing program in 2010.
- Most respondents were interested in being a passenger for carpooling and dynamic ridesharing. Commuter Connections is looking to add a ridesharing component to a smart phone app; however, safety and liability issues need to be worked out.
- Awareness of local commuter services in the area range from 11 percent to 56 percent. Montgomery County’s high level of recognition is mainly among the business community. The County’s primary outreach is to employers v. residents.
- Sixty percent of respondents say employers offer employees some form of transit benefit; SmartBenefits is the most widely used.
- The SOV mode split is lower for respondents that have access to commuter-related programs at their place of employment.
- A major challenge of transit marketing is due the transient population of the DC region; also noted that automakers easily spend more on advertising than the top 10 cities spend on their transportation system.
- There have been significant emission reductions due to cleaner cars – Environmental Protection Agency is looking into changing the ozone standards to better conform to changes in emissions control technology.

- There are discussions with MWCOG regarding “over sampling” for Montgomery County data, providing a better picture for the County. However, it is costly – data collection and analysis costs are \$375,000-400,000.

**Item 5-Traffic Mitigation Plans:** **Jim Carlson** reported, as a result of Sharp and Co. efforts, two new companies have submitted Traffic Mitigation Plans (TMPs) -

- The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine -50 employees
- Whole Foods-200 employees

He also reported that he is working with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce to secure two large and two small business representatives for the Committee. **Mr. Carlson** said he would reach out to selected employers in the TMD. **Sande Brecher** asked Committee members to assist as well.

**Ms. Brecher** asked for feedback regarding West Montgomery Citizens Advisory Board discussion in creating an additional advisory group. **John Mertens** said there was a joint letter with Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs) to establish such a group, and there were two planning presentations –Downtown Bethesda and West bard. **Ms. Condos** will circulate the letter.

#### **Item 6-Updates:**

- Ride On bus changes went into effect Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, to improve service to 25 routes.
- The County’s new Public Information Specialist will be producing a new *Go Montgomery* newsletter.
- Pedestrian crossing times have been upgraded to 3.5 feet per second for 65 percent of traffic lights in the County. The earlier standard crossing time assumption for peds was four feet per second; the new standard allows more time to cross.

#### **Sharp & Co Updates:**

- Sharp has been canvassing of Friendship Heights employers, cross checking the ACT database and contacting employers to update contact information. Companies in the database have increased from 296 to 434.
- Four Community Information Days events were held.
- Sent email blast encouraging companies to submit TMP Annual Reports.
- Encouraging companies to be nominated for the Council of Government Employer Recognition Awards; Whole Foods and Wedding Wire have submitted their nominations.

The Committee discussed the National Park Service decision to charge fees for access to the C&O Tow Path. The many access points along the path will make toll collection difficult. There is also the issue of how to collect the fees without deterring people from using the path as an alternative to driving. The Park Service states that the fees are critical to the park's operation, and 100 percent of the fees collected at the C&O Canal are to be invested to improve facilities. Additional information at the National Park Service web site: [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) / type “c&o fee proposal” in the Search box.

**Ms. Brecher** passed out a “Safety for Seniors” driver’s handout.

The Committee discussed keeping Metro in safe operating order in light of the recent major accident and having **Gary Erenrich**, the County’s Metro liaison, address the Committee at a future meeting.

**Adjourn**

**Next meeting February10, 2015**